

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Please amend Claims as follows:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A structuring method, including photolithographically exposing a pattern comprising at least a first pattern portion and a second pattern portion onto a surface, said surface comprising at least a first surface portion at which a tangential plane to the surface extends in a first plane and a second surface portion at which a tangential plane to the surface extends in a second plane not coinciding with the first plane, the method comprising

a first exposure step, in which the first pattern portion is exposed, therein being focused into a first focal plane, and

a second exposure step, in which the second pattern portion is exposed, therein being focused into a second focal plane which is different from the first focal plane,

wherein the first pattern portion and the second pattern portion are exposed such that they at least partly overlap on the surface.

Claim 2 (original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the first focal plane and the second focal plane are mutually parallel.

Claim 3 (original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the first focal plane extends parallel to the first plane.

Claim 4 (original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the second focal plane extends parallel to the second plane.

Claim 5 (cancelled)

Claim 6 (original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the first exposure step and the second exposure step are performed subsequently.

Claim 7 (original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the distance perpendicular to the first or second focal plane between the first focal plane and the second focal plane is 150 μm .

Claim 8 (currently amended): A structuring method, including photolithographically exposing a pattern comprising at least a first pattern portion and a second pattern portion onto a surface, said surface comprising at least one planar top face extending in a first plane, one planar bottom face extending in a second plane being parallel to and not coinciding with the first plane, and a sloping step face connecting the top face and the bottom face, the method comprising

a first exposure step, in which the first pattern portion is exposed onto the top face and at least part of the sloping step face, with the first pattern portion being focused into a first focal plane, and

a second exposure step, in which the second pattern portion is exposed onto the bottom face and at least part of the sloping step face, with the second pattern portion being focused into a second focal plane different from the first focal plane,

wherein the first pattern portion and the second pattern portion are exposed such that they at least partly overlap on the surface.

Claim 9 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the first focal plane and the second focal plane are mutually parallel.

Claim 10 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the first focal plane extends parallel to the first plane.

Claim 11 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the second focal plane extends parallel to the second plane.

Claim 12 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein
the first focal plane is spaced closer to the first plane than the second
focal plane is, and
the second focal plane is spaced closer to the second plane than the
first focal plane is.

Claim 13 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein
the first focal plane coincides with the first plane, and the second focal
plane coincides with the second plane.

Claim 14 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein
the first focal plane coincides with the first plane or the second focal
plane coincides with the second plane.

Claim 15 (currently amended): The method according to claim 8, wherein
~~The first pattern portion and the second pattern portion are exposed~~
~~such that they at least partly overlap on the surface.~~
the first pattern portion is exposed onto a part of the sloping step face
so that it covers slightly more than half of the sloping step face, and
the second pattern portion is exposed onto another part of the sloping
step face so that it covers slightly more than half of the sloping step face.

Claim 16 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the first
exposure step and the second exposure step are performed subsequently.

Claim 17 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the distance
perpendicular to the first or second focal plane between the first focal plane
and the second focal plane is 150 μm .

~~Claim 18 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein two different~~
~~masks are used to expose the first pattern portion and the second pattern~~
~~portion, respectively.~~

Claim 19 (original): The method according to claim 8, further comprising, after the first and the second exposure step,

a deposition step, in which a conductive material is deposited to the surface and further treated, if necessary, so as to generate a conductive structure made of conducting material and having a shape which corresponds to the shape of the pattern.

Claim 20 (currently amended): A structuring method, including photolithographically exposing a pattern comprising at least a first pattern portion and a second pattern portion onto a surface, said surface comprising at least one planar top face extending in a first plane, one planar bottom face extending in a second plane being parallel to and not coinciding with the first plane, and a sloping step face connecting the top face and the bottom face, the method comprising

a first exposure step, in which the first pattern portion is exposed onto the top face and at least part of the sloping step face, with the first pattern portion being focused into a first focal plane,

a second exposure step, in which the second pattern portion is exposed onto the bottom face and at least part of the sloping step face, with the second pattern portion being focused into a second focal plane different from the first focal plane, and

at least one further exposure step, wherein

in the further exposure step, a further pattern portion is exposed onto at least part of the sloping step, with the further pattern portion being focused into a further focal plane,

wherein pattern portions resulting from difference exposure steps out of the first, second and further exposure steps and being adjacent on the surface at least partially overlap.

Claim 21 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein at least two out of the first focal plane and the second focal plane and the further focal plane/s are mutually parallel.

Claim 22 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein at least one focal plane out of the first focal plane and the second focal plane and the further focal planes extends parallel to the first or second plane.

Claim 23 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein
the first focal plane is spaced closer to the first plane than the second
focal plane is, and
the second focal plane is spaced closer to the second plane than the
first focal plane is.

Claim 24 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein
the first focal plane coincides with the first plane, and the second focal
plane coincides with the second plane.

Claim 25 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein
the first focal plane coincides with the first plane or the second focal
plane coincides with the second plane.

Claim 26 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein
the further focal plane/s is/are located between the first focal plane and
the second focal plane.

Claim 27 (cancelled)

Claim 28 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein
pattern portions resulting from different exposure steps out of the first,
second and further exposure steps and being adjacent on the surface have an
overlap of from 1 to 5 μm .

Claim 29 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein at least two
out of the first exposure step, the second exposure step, and the further
exposure step/s are performed subsequently.

~~Claim 30 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein the distance
perpendicular to the first or second focal plane between the first focal plane
and the second focal plane is 150 μm .~~

Claim 31 (original): The method according to claim 20, wherein a different
mask is used to expose each of the first pattern portion, the second pattern
portion, and the further pattern portion/s, respectively.

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cont.

Claim 32 (currently amended): The method according to claim 20,

~~wherein the first pattern portion and the second pattern portion are exposed such that they at least partly overlap on the surface, and,~~

further comprising, after the first, ~~and the second~~ and the further exposure steps, a deposition step, in which a conductive material is deposited to the surface so as to generate a conductive structure made of conducting material and having a shape which corresponds to the shape of the pattern.

Claim 33 (currently amended): A structuring method, including photolithographically exposing a pattern comprising at least a first pattern portion and a second pattern portion onto a surface extending in a surface plane and being structured perpendicular to the surface plane, the method comprising

a resist coating step, in which the surface is coated by a photosensitive resist,

a first exposure step, in which the first pattern portion is exposed into the resist, therein being focused into a first focal plane,

a second exposure step, in which the second pattern portion is exposed into the resist, therein being focused into a second focal plane which is different from the first focal plane, wherein the first pattern portion and the second pattern portion are exposed such that they at least partly overlap on the surface.

a development step, in which the exposed resist is developed so as to transfer the pattern into the resist, and

a deposition step, in which a conductive material is deposited to the surface and further treated, if necessary, so as to generate a conductive structure made of conducting material and having a shape which corresponds to the shape of the pattern.

Claim 34 (currently amended): A structuring method, including photolithographically exposing a pattern comprising at least a first pattern portion and a second pattern portion onto a surface extending in a surface plane and being structured perpendicular to the surface plane, the method comprising

a deposition step, in which a conductive material is deposited to the surface,

a resist coating step, in which the surface is coated by a photosensitive resist,

a first exposure step, in which the first pattern portion is exposed into the resist, therein being focused into a first focal plane,

a second exposure step, in which the second pattern portion is exposed into the resist, therein being focused into a second focal plane which is different from the first focal plane, wherein the first pattern portion and the second pattern portion are exposed such that they at least partly overlap on the surface.

a development step, in which the exposed resist is developed so as to transfer the pattern into the resist, and
an etching step, in which the exposed material not covered by the resist is etched.
